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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 0248  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LJUBLJANA 000064

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/11/2019  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [IS](#) [SI](#)  
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE REQUEST: FORMER SLOVENIAN FM RUPEL ASKED  
TO LEAD UNHRC MISSION TO GAZA

REF: FREDEN-YEAGER/STORELLA E-MAIL AND RESPONSES.

Classified By: CDA Brad Freden, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE REQUEST: CDA met March 11 with former Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel ) now PM Pahor,s diplomatic &Special Envoy8 ) at Rupel's request to discuss a proposal that he lead a UN Human Rights Council fact-finding mission to Gaza. Rupel said he was asked by the Council President on March 9 to head the mission, and he is looking for our views by OOB on March 12, when he is supposed to reply to Council President Uhomoibhi. In a follow-up conversation on March 11, CDA informally conveyed initial feedback provided by Washington stakeholders via e-mail (refs). In response, Rupel said he was hoping for "a definitive position" from Washington, and that he would likely base his decision on our advice. Please provide cable or e-mail guidance by OOB Central European time March 12.  
END SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE REQUEST.

¶2. (C) According to Rupel, the basis of the mission is a resolution sponsored by Egypt, Pakistan and Cuba, on which the EU abstained. He noted that the Israelis are vehemently opposed to the mission and have threatened to deny visas to its members. Rupel agreed that the resolution calling for the missions was "one-sided.8 Nevertheless, he was trying to determine whether having a diplomat from a small European country lead the mission would help or hinder U.S. objectives in the region. He said he had discussed the matter with the EC's Javier Solana. Rupel described Solana,s position as &ambiguous,8 noting the importance of the mission but also Israel's opposition.

¶3. (C) Rupel said that Slovenian Prime Minister Pahor supports his taking the position, but with an important caveat: Rupel's leadership of the fact-finding mission must not "cause problems for Slovenia." Foreign Minister Zbogar reportedly encouraged Rupel, telling him that Israel might benefit from having a &sympathetic8 country/individual lead the mission, in which case Rupel would be a good choice. Rupel asserted that Council President Uhomoibhi would like to put a European in charge of the mission, and that the Egyptians &would be thrilled8 if Rupel agreed.

¶4. (C) COMMENT. Rupel acknowledged the mission's flawed mandate and that his leadership ) or the leadership of any European diplomat ) would add credibility. On the other hand, Rupel felt that he could also add much-needed balance to the mission and its report. He is prepared to turn down the offer -- in fact he said he at already drafted a letter to that effect -- but wanted to consult with us first. He asked us to consider the alternatives and advise him whether or not his leadership of the fact-finding mission would be useful.

FREDEN